

who make their home, car, and businesses more energy efficient.

House Republicans stand ready and willing to help American families combat the increased costs of energy. I invite my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join us.

CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT TO RESCIND HIS VETO THREAT OF MEDICARE IMPROVEMENTS

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to urge the President to reconsider his veto threat of H.R. 6331, the broadly supported Medicare improvement legislation that was passed by this House on June 24. It is my hope that the other body takes quick action to pass this responsible legislation. The Medicare beneficiaries and veterans who are enrolled in TRICARE are depending on this physician payment fix becoming law.

If this legislation is not passed into law, millions of Americans will no longer be able to visit their physicians and receive the regular quality care that they rely on. I understand that some Members of the Congress have concerns about the pay-for in this legislation. However, this Congress and this government cannot continue to pass the buck on fiscal responsibility whenever we are faced with difficult choices.

I believe we have found a responsible way to pay for the physician payment fix that is in the best interest of all Medicare beneficiaries. And again, I urge the President to rescind his veto threat.

A FEW FACTS ON ENERGY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, here are a few facts on energy I would like to share. America currently has an estimated 175 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 1.1 trillion barrels of oil that is off-limits to exploration. In ANWR alone, there is an estimated 10.4 billion barrels of oil. Currently 85 percent of the lower 48 Outer Continental Shelf energy resources remain under the lock and key of the Federal Government. Only 6 percent of the 700 million acres of federally owned subsurface mineral estate has been leased for oil and gas exploration.

The estimated Federal revenue that would be generated by opening up these lands that are currently off-limits to leasing is upwards of \$60 trillion. Americans support exploring for these resources and breaking America's dependence on foreign oil. The American people are demanding Congress take action. That is why House Republicans

will continue to fight for an all-of-the-above energy plan that will produce more American-made energy while investing in alternative fuels and promoting conservation.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

RECOGNIZING THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, Congress came back this week from celebrating our Nation's Independence Day. This is a special time to reflect on America's difficult history and the true essence of what she stands for. Since the beginning, America has thrived on the contributions of its immigrant labor force. Sadly today, the positive contributions of the immigrant labor force to our society are too often unnoticed.

Hardworking families contribute daily and pay their share into the American system. Hardworking mothers sometimes work three jobs, give up their weekends, and take overtime and night shifts to feed and clothe their children. Hardworking fathers wake up at 4 a.m. to go to work, earn below minimum wages, and manage to provide for their families.

Immigrants contribute in taxes from their paychecks just like the next person through shopping at a variety of stores, restaurants, and gas stations. In fact, the IRS reported that between 1996 to 2003, immigrants contributed \$50 billion in Federal taxes.

We cannot afford to ignore the figures, and more importantly, we cannot afford to ignore the positive contributions of immigrants in America. We need comprehensive immigration for the security of our Nation.

MORE CONSERVATION AND MORE DRILLING IS NEEDED FOR OUR ENERGY PROBLEM

(Mr. KELLER of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the problem of skyrocketing gas prices. We must reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Our constituents deserve straight talk on this issue and here it is: The main component of the price of gasoline at the pump is crude oil. Crude oil is a commodity governed by the law of supply and demand. Therefore, we must reduce our demand and increase our supply.

We should reduce our demand by having tax incentives for hybrids, raising fuel efficiency standards, and investing in alternative renewable energy sources like wind, solar, biomass, and nuclear. We must also increase our domestic supply of oil. We can do that by drilling in Alaska, drilling in the gulf of Mexico, and building more refineries.

The straight talk is we need a comprehensive approach of more drilling and more conservation to achieve long-term energy independence.

JOB LOSSES CONTINUE FOR SIX CONSECUTIVE MONTHS AS ECONOMY GETS WORSE

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, every month this year the Bush economy has lost more jobs than it has created. In June, 62,000 jobs were lost bringing the total number this year to 428,000 jobs lost. Yet President Bush and some Washington Republicans continue to contend that our economy is not in a recession. These job numbers were particularly devastating to the 3.8 million workers who have lost their jobs and continue to struggle to find new work. It's difficult to find a job when the economy is simply not producing them.

That's why the Democrats fought hard to pass legislation to extend unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks to more than 1.6 million Americans who have been hurt by President Bush's economic policies. This money will allow workers in my home State of New Jersey and throughout the Nation to pay their bills and put food on the table while they continue to look for a job.

Extending unemployment insurance is just another example of how Democrats are changing the way business is done in Washington. No longer are the needs of working families forgotten in this Congress.

SAME OLD EXCUSES WON'T WORK ANY LONGER

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that the American people have been begging, literally begging this Congress to act on the energy crisis, all we've heard from the majority are excuses for why we cannot access our own domestic supplies of energy. They say that we cannot drill in the ANWR because it will adversely affect the caribou. This despite the fact that the caribou have literally flourished along the north slope of Alaska since the introduction of the pipeline.

They say we cannot drill offshore because of environmental threats. This despite the fact that offshore platforms in the Gulf of Mexico have survived both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita with very limited or no environmental damage.

The majority continues to offer excuse after excuse but offers nothing to the American consumers who want some relief at the pump. With gas prices crashing through \$4 per gallon